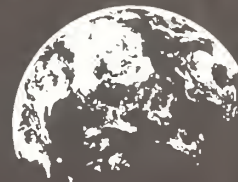


Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



Farm Broadcasters Letter



Letter No. 2241

December 12, 1985

NOV. WEATHER IN USSR

As a result of November's highly variable temperature pattern, hardening conditions for Soviet winter grains are mixed. They vary from well-hardened in northern areas, to moderately-hardened in some areas, to minimal-hardening in the southern Ukraine and the North Caucasus. The estimated size of the 1985 Soviet grain harvest remains unchanged at 190 million tons, including 83 million wheat, 94 million coarse grains and 13 million miscellaneous grains and pulses.

MORE ON GOSAGROPROM

The new ministry for agriculture in the USSR is called the USSR State Agro-industrial Committee - or GOSAGROPROM. It's an attempt by Gorbachev to streamline the Soviet economy and address the problem of coordination within the agricultural sector. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, it may improve the efficiency in the Soviet agricultural economy by better coordinating the activity of organizations in the agricultural complex. It's unlikely the organization will have much impact on gross agricultural output and grain production. That would require price changes and greater incentives to affect output.

MORE ON THE NEXT USSR 5-YEAR PLAN

In November the Soviet announced plans for the twelfth five-year period, from 1986 to 1990. The gross agriculture production is to increase between 14 and 16 pct. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, these plans are not realistic in light of past performance. In the eleventh five-year period, gross agriculture production increased only 6 pct., one half of the planned increase. Estimated grain production between 1981 and 1985 averaged 178 million tons, only 74 pct. of target. There may be some improvement due to three factors: The new leadership of Gorbachev, the new agricultural super-ministry, and greater attention to agronomic practices.

STORAGE LOAN PROGRAM EXTENDED

Producers with maturing grain loans under the Special Producer Storage Loan Program will be given the opportunity to extend their loans for one year, according to Sec'y of Agriculture John R. Block. Said Block, "The option to extend their loans will permit producers to continue to maintain control of their grain and give them more time to decide whether they prefer to repay the loan or forfeit the grain to the Commodity Credit Corporation." Producers may repay extended loans any time during the loan period without penalty.

U.S. TRADE
PROSPECTS -
WHEAT

The 1985/86 wheat export forecast for the United States remains unchanged at 27.2 million tons, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Improved export prospects for Canada were offset by reductions in the Argentine export forecast. Increasing pressure for major competing countries to ship their wheat early may mean lower U.S. prospects in the near-term, but tightening competitor supplies in the longer term may benefit U.S. wheat exports. Accumulated wheat exports for the June/Nov. 1985 period are 12.2 million tons, nearly 50 pct. behind last year at this time.

U.S. TRADE
PROSPECTS -
COARSE GRAINS

The 1985/86 U.S. coarse grain trade forecast remains virtually unchanged at 49.1 million tons, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. However, export prospects at least for corn are decidedly brighter. Although sales and shipments to date are lagging, increased import demand from Mexico and Brazil and lower export prospects for Argentina, may mean improved prospects for U.S. corn exports. Demand for other U.S. coarse grains, however, continues to be adversely affected by ample exportable supplies in the world market of barley, feed wheat, and non-grain feed ingredients.

USSR GRAIN
IMPORTS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture didn't change its estimate of USSR grain imports at 35 million tons from a month ago. Wheat and coarse grain imports are projected to total 17 million tons each with miscellaneous grains, rice and pulses adding another million tons. The total level of USSR grain purchases for delivery in the 1985/86 July to June marketing year are estimated to be between 17 and 18 million tons. Over the past month, the Soviets added to earlier purchases of U.S. corn and European Community wheat and barley. The Soviets appear to have well over half of their projected wheat import requirements and close to half of projected coarse grain imports covered as of early December 1985.

U.S. AG. TRADE

U.S. agricultural exports during October 1985 amounted to \$2.3 billion, and 9.8 million tons, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. While both the export value and volume for the first month of fiscal 1986 (Oct. 1985) were down from Oct. 1984, the Oct. 1985 value and volume were up from the previous month by almost \$460 million or 24 pct., and 2.2 million tons, or 29 pct. The sharpest year-to-year declines in Oct. occurred in wheat, wheat flour, corn, grain sorghum, soybean oil, cotton and tobacco. Such declines were partially offset by gains in shipments of soybeans, soybean meal, rice, peanuts, dairy products and livestock and products.

HIGHLIGHTS:
WORLD WHEAT
PRODUCTION

The world production of wheat for 1985/86 is estimated at 505.2 million tons, down 1.1 million or less than 1 pct. from last month and down 2 pct. from last year's record harvest. Some changes from a month ago include: Argentina - Production estimated at 10 million tons; East Europe - 37.1 million tons; European Community - 10 - 66.8 million tons; Canada - 23.9 million tons.

FROM OUR
TELEVISION
SERVICE

OUTLOOK - DAIRY...USDA economist Clifford Carman examines the outlook and current situation for dairy, focusing on the recent dairy diversion program and the impact it had on dairy production this year. Vic Powell interviews. (531)

OUTLOOK - POULTRY AND EGGS...Broiler and turkey producers are expected to expand output in 1986, but egg production may be off slightly. USDA economist Allen Baker talks about the overall outlook for the poultry industry and what factors are affecting it. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (532)

GREECE - MARKET FOR U.S. EXPORTS...Greece is currently an export market for approximately 150 million dollars worth of U.S. agricultural products. Natalie Solar-Lerbs, the USDA attache from Greece describes this ever-changing market. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (533)

OUTLOOK - LIVESTOCK...World meat production is expected to continue its upward movement through 1986, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. USDA economist Ron Gustafson comments on the major factors affecting the red meat industry. Vic Powell interviews. (534)

OUTLOOK - SUGARS AND SWEETENERS...The world sugar market continues to be depressed, even though raw sugar production in 1985/86 is forecast to decline. USDA economist Robert Barry discusses the world and domestic sugar situation and what it means to the sugar industry. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (535)



FROM OUR RADIO

AGRICULTURE USA #1489...(Weekly 13½ min documentary) On this edition Brenda Curtis takes you back to An Old Fashioned Christmas. She talks with USDA historian Wayne Rasmussen as well as some wonderful Senior Citizens about Christmas in rural America a hundred years ago.

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1478...(Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; Soviet five year economic plan; The Hills Iowa tragedy; Returned packages from Iran; Feed grain outlook.

CONSUMER TIME #971...(Weekly reel of five 2½-3 min features) The ice cream experience; Food price prediction; Give a hoot; High stepping horses; Smoking on the decline.

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...Mon, Dec. 23, Ag. finance report; Cattle on feed report; Livestock slaughter and hogs and pigs. Tues, Dec. 24, Weekly weather and crop report; Tues, Dec. 31, Ag. prices report and weekly weather and crop report. Dial the USDA National News Line 202-488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 p.m. EST each working day.

OFF MIKE

Sec'y of Agriculture John Block had to cancel his trip to Brussels this week, and three farm broadcasters who were going along had to do likewise, Johnnie Hood (WPTF/So. Farm Net, Raleigh, NC), Mark Vail (Kansas Ag Net, Topeka, KS), and Jim Yancey (Progressive Farmer Net, Starkville, MS). Hopefully another time ... Orion Samuelson and Max Armstrong (WGN, Chicago, IL) are anchoring the new Agri-Net, a satellite fed programming service. And down in Florida, the Independent Florida Agrinet is on the air and has been for three months ... Layne Beaty (USDA Radio/TV Chief, retired) dropped us a note to let us know he and Virginia are on their way to California to take up residence at 1552 Camino Del Mar, Apt. 610, Del Mar, CA 92014, telephone 619-755-7698, until mid-March ... Dave Hill is available for farm broadcasting work. His position as farm director at KBIZ, Ottumwa, IA, was eliminated. Contact him at: 515-969-4441, P.O. Box 582, Eddyville, IA ... Some catchin' up stuff from the recent NAFB meeting in Kansas City. Ray Kremer received a standing ovation of appreciation when it was announced he had retired as NAFB's Senior Sales/Marketing Director. We wish Ray happy retirement ... The CIBA-Geigy "Broadcaster of the Year" Award went to Ed Slusarczyk (WTLB/AG Radio Net, Utica, NY). Our congratulations!! ... The same company's coveted "Food-in-Mouth" award went to Mark Vail (Kansas Ag Net, Topeka, KS). Mark "earned" the award as editor of NAFB's newsletter CHATS ... Orion Samuelson (WGN, Chicago, IL) presented the NAFB scholarships to Keith Anderson, Univ. of Illinois (\$1500) and to Cheryl Ebbert, Univ. of Florida (\$1000). Kathleen Lonergan, who worked with our USDA radio service last summer, was one of the finalists ... The DeKalb "Oscars in Agriculture" were presented. Lee Kline (WHO, Des Moines, IA) received the Radio Oscar; Harry Martin, Marian Martin, Dan Modlin, and Ned Arthur, Indiana Rural Radio Net, New Palestine, IN, received the Radio Team Oscar; Al Gustin (Meyer Broadcasting Co, Bismarck, ND) received the Television Oscar; and Bryce Anderson, Dave Hamer, and John Prescott (WOWT, Omaha, NE) received the Television Team Oscar. Congratulations, all around!!

Jim Johnson
JAMES L. JOHNSON, Chief, Radio and Television Division

Farm Broadcasters Letter
Radio and Television, Rm. 410-A
Office of Information, OGA
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
Penalty for Private Use, \$300

POSTAGE & FEES PAID
U.S. Dept. of Agriculture
AGF-101

